

# POSITION DESCRIPTION

## Director, Media



WESTERN SYDNEY  
UNIVERSITY



### POSITION DETAILS

|                 |                                                    |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Position Title  | Director, Media                                    |
| Classification  | Senior                                             |
| Position Number | NEW                                                |
| School/Office   | Future Students, Marketing & Communications Office |
| Division        | Western Sydney and External Engagement             |

### POSITION PURPOSE

The Director, Media provides enterprise leadership of the University's media strategy. The role shapes and protects the University's external reputation, strengthening institutional influence, and ensuring a coordinated, authoritative and evidence-led approach to proactive media, issues management and crisis communication.

The role leads the University's media function in identifying, developing and amplifying stories about student success, impactful research, educational excellence, partnerships and regional impact. It translates the University's strategic priorities into a coordinated portfolio of media, thought leadership, public commentary and reputation-building initiatives that deliver measurable institutional value.

With strong news judgement and a deep understanding of the external environment, the role builds trusted relationships with journalists, editors, producers and media organisations.

The role leads a high-performing media and social media team and works collaboratively across the University. It establishes the University-wide media operating framework, including governance, standards, escalation protocols, spokesperson preparedness, performance measures and coordinated response arrangements. The Director is accountable for prioritising resources, external providers and investment to deliver enterprise outcomes.

### KEY ACCOUNTABILITIES

#### 1. Enterprise Media and Reputation Strategy

- Lead the development, implementation and continuous review of the University's enterprise media strategy, ensuring alignment with the University's strategic plan, values and institutional

- priorities.
- Lead the identification, development and amplification of compelling and newsworthy stories that increase the University's share of voice and institutional profile. Prioritise opportunities according to their strategic value, audience impact and contribution to institutional reputation.
- Develop proactive media campaigns that showcase the University's research, education, partnerships and community impact. Lead an integrated portfolio of thought leadership, expert commentary and public positioning initiatives across the University.
- Use environmental scanning, media intelligence, stakeholder sentiment and performance data to identify emerging risks and opportunities and inform executive decision-making.

## **2. Executive Advice and Institutional Positioning**

- Provide independent, timely and evidence-based recommendations on institutional posture, public response, spokesperson strategy, disclosure, timing and escalation in sensitive or high-consequence matters.
- Provide expert media advice to leaders, academics and subject-matter experts. Influence executive decisions by integrating media, public policy, stakeholder and reputation considerations into institutional advice.
- Prepare senior executives and designated spokespeople for high-profile interviews, public commentary and other significant external engagements.

## **3. Media Governance, Issues and Crisis Leadership**

- Establish and maintain the University-wide media governance framework, including policies, standards, decision rights, escalation thresholds, authorised spokesperson arrangements and quality assurance requirements.
- Assess reputational risk arising from potential media coverage and develop mitigation and response strategies. Maintain enterprise oversight of significant media and reputation risks and provide early warning advice, treatment recommendations and executive reporting.
- Coordinate media responses and engagement in partnership with the Executive Director, Strategic Communications and Chief Marketing Officer. Lead the media component of the University's crisis and critical incident response arrangements.
- Support the development, maintenance and implementation of issues and crisis communication plans and response frameworks. Own the media response protocols and conduct post-incident reviews so lessons are embedded in institutional preparedness, governance and capability.
- Exercise sound judgement in responding to media enquiries and managing sensitive matters. Make timely decisions in environments where information may be incomplete, consequences significant and response timeframes compressed.

## **4. Media Relations, Public Influence and External Representation**

- Build and maintain strong relationships with journalists, editors, producers and media organisations, including culturally and linguistically diverse publications. Develop strategic relationships with senior media, government communication leaders, sector bodies and other influential stakeholders to advance institutional priorities.
- Lead proactive and reactive media engagement across the University.
- Prepare media statements, press releases, briefing materials and interview preparation. Ensure significant external media communications are strategically aligned, accurate, timely and consistent with institutional obligations and approved positions.
- Coordinate media opportunities, interviews and press conferences to maximise positive media outcomes.

## **5. University-wide Leadership and Capability**

- Lead the development of a cohesive, high-performing media and social media team, driving proactive storytelling, accountability, collaboration and continuous improvement. Establish a distributed University-wide media operating model that aligns activity across faculties, institutes,

- schools, divisions and central portfolios.
- Lead multidisciplinary response groups for significant matters involving legal, governance, safety, student, research, government, community and operational considerations.
- Build capability across the team in media engagement, issues management and storytelling. Build institutional capability through executive preparedness, spokesperson development, scenario planning, simulation exercises, coaching and practical guidance.
- Chair or lead an enterprise network of media representatives to coordinate priorities, manage interdependencies and strengthen institutional responsiveness.

## **6. Performance, Resources and Continuous Improvement**

- Set priorities, allocate workload and ensure the delivery of media outcomes in time. Prioritise the function's workforce, budget, external agency arrangements, technology and investment according to institutional strategy, risk and impact.
- Establish performance measures and monitor outcomes to ensure objectives are achieved. Establish an enterprise media and reputation performance framework measuring reach, influence, quality, share of voice, stakeholder impact, issue-response effectiveness and contribution to institutional outcomes.
- Provide regular intelligence and performance reporting to senior executives and relevant governance bodies, identifying trends, risks, opportunities and recommended actions.
- Set performance expectations for external agencies and service providers and ensure appropriate quality, responsiveness, value and risk management.
- Advise the Chief Marketing Officer on the future workforce, capability, technology and investment required to sustain an effective enterprise media function.

## **QUALIFICATIONS, EXPERIENCE AND SKILLS**

1. Degree qualifications in communications, journalism, public relations, public affairs or a related discipline, with postgraduate qualifications desirable, or an equivalent combination of senior professional experience and education.
2. Extensive executive-level experience leading media, public affairs or reputation functions in a large, complex and publicly accountable organisation.
3. Demonstrated success developing and leading enterprise-wide media strategies aligned with organisational priorities.
4. Demonstrated leadership of complex issues and crisis communication, including risk assessment, executive advice, decision support and coordinated institutional response.
5. Proven ability to establish governance frameworks, operating standards, escalation protocols and performance measures across a complex or decentralised organisation.
6. Demonstrated capacity to influence across organisational boundaries and align diverse stakeholders around enterprise priorities.
7. Expert knowledge of the Australian media and news environment, with a strong understanding of government, public policy, Western Sydney and the higher education sector.
8. Demonstrated people and organisational leadership, including building senior capability, leading multidisciplinary teams and embedding accountability and continuous improvement.
9. Demonstrated experience managing budgets, workforce priorities, procurement and external service providers appropriate to a major institutional function.
10. Exceptional judgement, political awareness, written and verbal communication capability, and the credibility to operate with senior leaders and external decision-makers.
11. Demonstrated use of media intelligence, data and environmental scanning to shape organisational decisions and evaluate institutional outcomes.

## KEY RELATIONSHIPS

### Reports to

- Chief Marketing Officer

### Key internal relationships

- Vice-Chancellor and President
- Chancellor
- Executive Director, Strategic Communications
- Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Western Sydney and External Engagement
- Senior Executive Group and portfolio leaders
- Faculties, institutes, schools and divisions
- Legal, governance, risk, safety, student, research and government relations functions
- Academic and professional staff, subject-matter experts and designated spokespeople

### Key external relationships

- Senior editors, journalists, producers, commentators and media outlets
- Government communication leaders and agencies
- Higher education and sector bodies
- External partners, industry stakeholders and community organisations
- External agencies, advisers and service providers

## CHALLENGES

- Protecting and advancing institutional reputation in an environment of high public scrutiny, contested narratives, sector reform and rapidly changing political, media and community expectations.
- Providing authoritative and balanced advice where decisions involve significant reputational, legal, safety, public interest and stakeholder consequences.
- Aligning diverse institutional interests and local communication priorities into a coherent University-wide media and reputation agenda.
- Anticipating emerging issues and determining proportionate responses where information may be incomplete, timeframes compressed and consequences significant.
- Balancing transparency, public accountability, institutional values and strategic positioning in sensitive or high-profile matters.
- Building sustainable enterprise capability while responding to immediate media demands and maintaining the confidence of senior institutional leaders.

## UNIVERSITY EXPECTATIONS

The University expects that all employees are aware of, and comply with legislation and Western's policies and procedures relevant to the position, including but not limited to:

- Code of Conduct
- Work Health and Safety and Wellbeing Management System
- Enterprise Agreement or Award
- Anti-discrimination principles, Equal Employment Opportunity and staff and student equity.

**Approved by: Chief People Officer**

**Date: 23.09.2026**